

ANNUAL REPORT

Newfane Schools

January 31, 1910

School Superintendent's Report

To the Citizens and Voters of Newfane:

The school work of the year opened with a meeting at Newfane March 26, called and conducted by State Superintendent Mason S. Stone, for school officials of West river valley towns. Your three directors and superintendent were present. Topics discussed included transportation, attendance and truancy laws, teaching of elementary agriculture and the Union District, the last being especially emphasized.

Quickly following came the cry of "Fire! Fire!" from Newfane. The village schoolhouse was swept away in flames. The club house was hastily fitted up, books and supplies were secured and this school, with the others, opened April 19. Teachers and pupils adapted themselves to the crowded quarters and did excellent work. The increasing cold compelled a vacation in October.

The new building has been erected at an approximate cost of \$4,000, and speaks for itself. It was opened for school work November 1. A few slight changes, at small cost, in the schoolroom itself might add much to its convenience for school use. Light, heat and ventilation are amply provided and the building should be a healthful and happy school-home for this and many succeeding generations of school children.

School buildings in No. 7, No. 9, and on Adams hill were sold as reported by the treasurer, and in No. 4 repaired, costing about \$100. Repairs are needed at South Newfane,

with some improvements there and at Williamsville. The Parish school was closed. With few exceptions pupils have been pleased with the change and have done better work, going to South Newfane and Williamsville schools.

Six schools of thirty weeks each have been maintained.

Eleven teachers have been employed. Two reside in town, Mrs. Edith J. Farnum and Miss Lottie Hunt. Newfane has two other resident teachers, Miss Maud Radway and Miss Mildred Palmer, who teach in Townshend. All teachers have been regularly certificated, the certificates including one life, three third grade, four second grade, and three first grade. Thorough work in all studies has been our aim. Most of the teachers also have given special attention to reading, writing, spelling, and analysis in arithmetic. This has resulted in marked improvement in many individual pupils and by entire classes.

Two teachers' meetings, April 23 and September 3, were held. These are important. They promote uniformity of work and deal with our own problems only.

Ten pupils were present every school day of the year. Others missed only from one to three days of full attendance. More than fifty single terms of full attendance are reported. This shows interest and earnest effort. On the other hand extreme indifference is shown by too many who fail to enroll when the term begins or leave before it closes. Many precious days and weeks are thus lost. If these lost weeks were taken into account in our state reports our attendance, which is given as nearly 93 per cent, would show greatly decreased percentage. In the main pupils have the "school spirit" and are anxious to progress. A most encouraging feature of the work is the inquiry advanced pupils are making about vacation study.

State examinations were held as appointed by Superintendent Stone, June 24-25 and August 26-27. High school tuition certificates were issued by County Examiner H. D.

Ryder to Miss Pearl Greenwood and Clarence Lewis, also to Miss Lena Randall on examinations of the previous year. Several others have taken a part of the state examination successfully.

Fourteen students have taken high school courses of study at an expense of \$288 for tuition. Two, James Flynn and Mildred Palmer, were graduated in June from Leland and Gray seminary.

Flag poles and flags have been provided for South Newfane and Brookside, other schools being already supplied.

More citizens than usual have visited schools, showing more interest.

Some questions have been asked which may be of interest to others and are answered herewith.

Expense of schools for three terms, winter of 1908-09, spring and fall of 1909, by districts (not including books and supplies), is as follows:

No. 1, Brookside,	32 weeks,	\$327 00
No. 2, Newfane,	28 weeks,	527 90
No. 4, Union,	26 weeks,	444 88
No. 6, Grammar, Williamsville,	32 weeks,	394 55
No. 6, Primary, Williamsville,	32 weeks,	388 55
No. 8, South Newfane,	32 weeks,	306 79

Note.—The variation in weeks is caused by short winter and fall terms in No. 2 and No. 4, with long fall term in all other districts.

As to wages.—Teachers' wages are permanently advancing.

As to school population.—The census of last year listed 175 names. This year there are 87 boys, 84 girls, total 171. Of these 37 are between five and eight years, 34 between fifteen and eighteen years, with 100 between eight and fifteen, or of compulsory school age. Twenty-five listed last year did not enter school, being over fifteen or under eight

years or leaving town early. Twenty-five or more have actually left town, while nearly as many more have moved in or become five years of age. Total enrollment was 163, of whom 139 had not enrolled elsewhere in Vermont since April 1.

As to books.—Forty different text books are required for the several classes and grades, and about 1000 books are in use each term. Expense for books and supplies is no larger than in ordinary years but loss by fire is not fully made up, there being some duplicate copies on hand and available.

Not only have all teachers changed within the year, but all directors also. The directors, who have put much time and energy into their work, assumed their duties resolved to reduce expenses if possible. Had the year been a normal one this would have been accomplished. As it is, emergencies have arisen and expenditures increased, aside from new building. One reason is the early closing of several schools, three of which were paid, for four terms. Another reason is Dummerston's tuition bill, by an oversight left for two years. This bill for \$85 will be reduced next year and the Townshend town tuition of \$100 eliminated, as no pupils now attend there. Transportation was reduced somewhat (proportionately), but a new route has been added, and part has been paid for four terms. Some parents are feeling to take more responsibility in sending their children to school themselves instead of making unreasonable demands of the town.

The directors, who have expressed themselves, feel that the custom which has been growing for some years of dividing the schools between directors may be expedient and necessary in minor affairs. If done in such a way as to make each one feel responsible for his own schools only, it may tend toward weakness of the school system financially and otherwise. The superintendent joins them in recommending at least three regular meetings annually for election

of teachers, outlining school policy for the town and discussion of financial and other important questions. In consulting together each has the benefit of wisdom and experience of all, learns the needs of all schools and can easily assume the duties of another or assist a new member. They have tried to keep in touch with each other and the work. In unity there is strength—for the directors, the schools, and the town.

After studying the Union District system somewhat carefully I can most earnestly recommend Newfane to join with neighboring towns in forming such a district for expert supervision with thirty (or not to exceed thirty-five) schools. Results should be gratifying and with small additional expense. If too many schools, widely scattered, are included, the work must necessarily be exhausting and very little time can be given to individual schools.

It is also recommended that the fall terms of school hereafter continue twelve weeks, with one week of vacation at Thanksgiving and possibly a recess covering Christmas and New Year's days, with early closing of winter term; also that Williamsville teachers be relieved of responsibility for the Christmas entertainment.

More strict enforcement of school attendance laws is urgently recommended. Can we afford to put so much money into schools and have them neglected? Our teachers have been unusually faithful in reporting absences to the proper authorities the past year.

Are we keeping in mind the main point in our educational system? Is it alone the dollars and cents (whether few or many) that we expend and the books perfectly or imperfectly gone over and understood, or does it also include that training which makes for purity of life, patriotism, and good citizenship? What does the school stand for in your district and mine? Are our pupils, while studying the various subjects taught, forming habits of order, accuracy and

punctuality, of gentleness, courtesy and consideration? Are they learning self-control, self-respect, respect for persons and for property, whether the property be that of individuals or of the public? Are we giving generously of our moral as well as financial support to the schools in helping to raise higher their standards?

Let us not forget that the course of study prescribed for elementary schools in Vermont is "good behavior, reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, geography, arithmetic, free-hand drawing, history and constitution of the United States, elementary physiology and hygiene with special reference to the effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics on the human system, geography, history, constitution and principles of government of Vermont," and that in this list first of all stands "good behavior." These two simple words linked together call attention to an important element in education which should permeate all elementary school work.

In closing I wish to thank our townspeople for their interest and encouragement, our directors and teachers for active and earnest coöperation in school matters.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGIE M. LOVE, Superintendent.





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

<https://archive.org/details/annualreportnewf00newf>



SCHOOL DIRECTORY, 1909-1910.

DIRECTORS.

Rev. O. E. Newton, Chairman,	Williamsville.
Floyd J. Fairbanks, Clerk,	Williamsville.
Frank A. DeWitt (resigned),	Newfane.
H. J. Batchelder (appointed to fill vacancy),	Newfane.

TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS.

Miss Lottie Hunt, year, No. 1, Brookside.
Miss Ruth E. Streeter, 1 term, No. 2, Newfane.
Miss Edith M. Clarke, 2 terms, No. 2, Newfane.
Miss Nellie E. Kingsbury, 1 term, No. 4, Union.
George J. Clarke, 1 term, No. 4, Union.
Mrs. Edith J. Farnum, 1 term, No. 4, Union.
Miss Clarissa Coolidge, year, No. 6, Grammar, Williamsville.
Miss Marion Parker, 1 term, No. 6, Primary, Williamsville.
Miss Harriett Corliss, 2 terms, No. 6, Primary, Williamsville.
Miss Gertrude Leavitt, 1 term, No. 8, South Newfane.
Miss Carlottie Williams, 1 term, No. 8, South Newfane.

TRUANT OFFICERS.

Luke O. Morse,	Williamsville.
Earl Davis,	Newfane.

SUPERINTENDENT.

Mrs. Georgie M. Love,	South Newfane.
-----------------------	----------------